

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
MINISTRY OF PANCHAYATI RAJ
RAJYA SABHA
UNSTARRED QUESTION NO. 1579
ANSWERED ON 12/03/2025

INITIATIVES REGARDING WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

1579 DR. K. LAXMAN:

Will the Minister of PANCHAYATI RAJ be pleased to state:

- (a) the key objectives of the new training modules for Women Elected Representatives (WERs) in Panchayats and the manner in which they address their specific needs;
- (b) the manner in which the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Proxy Representation, expected in January 2025, empower women's representation and eliminate proxy practices; and
- (c) the initiatives being taken to establish Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayats (WFGPs), and how does collaboration with UNFPA support this goal?

ANSWER

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR PANCHAYATI RAJ

(PROF. S.P. SINGH BAGHEL)

- (a) The Ministry has introduced a comprehensive training module to assist States and Union Territories (UTs) in building the capacity of Women Elected Representatives (WERs) in Panchayati Raj Institutions. This initiative aims to strengthen their leadership and managerial skills for more effective governance. The main objectives of the training module are to enhance the capacity of WERs in various aspects of rural governance, improve their knowledge and skills for effectively carrying out their roles and responsibilities, and develop their leadership, communication, and decision-making abilities for successful women-led governance.
- (b) The Ministry had formed an Advisory Committee to address the issue of Women Pradhans being represented by male family members, along with related concerns. The Committee held extensive consultations with various stakeholders, including Women Elected Representatives (WERs), State Panchayati Raj Departments, academic institutions, and NGOs. Based on these consultations, the Committee provided key recommendations to empower Women Elected Representatives and eliminate proxy representation. These recommendations include strategic policy and legal interventions, technological solutions, capacity-building programs, community engagement, and gender-responsive budgeting.
- (c) The Ministry has initiated the process of supporting States and Union Territories (UTs) in transforming selected Gram Panchayats (GPs) by focusing on Theme-9 of the Local

Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs). As part of this initiative, each State/UT has identified one GP in every district to be developed into a Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayat (MWFGP). To support this transformation, the Ministry has partnered with UNFPA as a Knowledge Partner to develop training modules and train a cadre of Master Trainers. These trainers will assist States/UTs in building the capacity of grassroots-level Elected Representatives (ERs) and Panchayati Raj Functionaries (PRFs) on various aspects of women-friendly governance, aiming to develop Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayats.
